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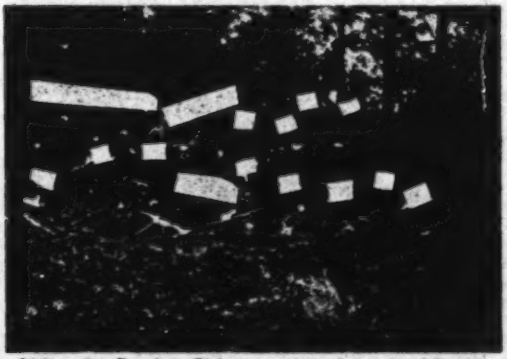

Lithuanian Freedom Fighters resting after a hard-fought battle—in Samagitia.

Religious Practices

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659 Since the fall of 1947, the Russians abandoned tolerance of the strictly religious functions of the faithful—adults attending church and receiving sacraments. The radio, press and tens of thousands of professional agitators are engaged in blasphemous atheistic propaganda aimed at discrediting the religion as "outdated witchcraft and prejudice" and attributing "fascist conspiracy" to the Vatican. This meant that the first attempt to create a "national Church" by subverting clergy and imposing "dvadsatkas" failed. But the effort was not abandoned.

Vatican, British and American broadcasts are heard —and the more important developments are relayed to the population by the clandestine press. Needless to say that the Lithuanians, facing daily the official attack on their Church and their Catholicism, are very saddened and embittered by the complete silence abroad over the martyrdom of Lithuania—compared with the publicity given the staged trials of various Church dignitaries in the satellite countries. They especially resent the omission of Lithuania from among the Catholic nations listed in foreign broadcasts as victimized by Soviet armed atheism.

All monasteries are shut down and friars-nuns dispersed. Catechetic instruction is banned from schools, the armed forces and from private tutoring within a family circle. In 1946 the Bishops had requested the authorities to permit catechetic instruction of school-age children in church structures but the authorities refused. The parents themselves presently prepare their children for the first communion.

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Church-goers are watched by MVD agents conspicuously posted near church doorways, and they are shadowed and questioned. Arrests were repeatedly made inside churches by armed cap-wearing MVD gangsters who loudly profane the churches. All state employees—and all people are state employees with the exception of the "kulaks" or independent smallholders refusing to go into "artels"—receive strict warnings to stop attending religious services ("witchcraft sessions"), or their conduct will be construed as a "demonstration of disloyalty to the existing order."

Students developed a spontaneous custom: on the way to schools they stop in a church to pray. The authorities strive to eradicate this custom by summoning their parents and threatening to expel children from

563 sonal risk: when the Russians arrived, the Jew informed them that a person who had secreted a Jew from the Nazis might most likely secret a "bandit" from the Russians—and the poor farmer was executed and his family exiled.

000 This reasoning seems to be generally adopted by the Russians—and no "heroics" are told them. The Russians show no excitement whatever regarding the massacres perpetrated by the Nazis. They conducted no special investigation or excavations—the Nazi practices too closely parallel those of the Soviets. . . . . Only in instances where they were tipped off that people had been executed clothed and unrobbed—did the Russians make excavations in quest for valuables. . . . They gathered up coins, jewelry, pulled gold from teeth, and ceremoniously reburied the skeletons.

Education

874 The University of Vilnius with medical and chemistry departments, and the University of Kaunas with
871 departments of medicine, architecture, construction, technology and chemistry, are functioning. Both universities provide compulsory instruction in "Marxism-Leninism Science" and military training. A Veterinarian Academy and the lower classes of the Agricultural Academy function at Kaunas. The Pedagoguic Institute and an Art Institute with classes in scultpure, architecture, graphics and painting are open in Vilnius. The Commercial Institute is at Klaipeda. The upper classes of the Agricultural Academy are still housed in the ruins of Dotnuva.

Eighty percent of the faculty staff and student body are Lithuanians. Deputy Rectors, in charge of "political education," are Russian MVD-men. Most of the aliens are concentrated in Vilnius. The total student body numbers about 6,000 (compared with over 2,000 university students in Western Germany).

Of secondary schools, there are about 90 gymnasia and 189 progymnasia with 65,000 students, and about 20 special schools of agriculture, orchardry, gardening, forestry, cattle breeding, bookkeeping, etc. The secondary schools follow an 8-year program—a recession to the antiquated pre-1914 system. The Russian language is taught from the third grade of grammar school. All textbooks are translations of Russian authors exclusively. Prewar textbooks are withdrawn from circulation and systematically destroyed.

186 In 1944 and 1945, the National Anthem of Lithuania was tolerated as a "national song" over the radio and at some official functions, but was banned from schools. It is still sung in some churches but is no longer heard elsewhere.

876 Since 1946, school programs were systematically
626 purged of all "western bourgeois" influence. In libraries, books of western authors were replaced by propaganda "masterpieces" of Russian literature. The Michurin theory is preached, and professors are compelled to publicly "confess" their former heresy. Every dissertation on any subject must faithfully seek some quotation from Stalin and Lenin "science" to prove the infallibility. Only students whose parents never owned more than 18 hectares of land are admitted to universities—others are "outlaws."

The universities demand that matriculating students submit loyalty certificates issued by local Party offices. The University of Kaunas still adheres to the

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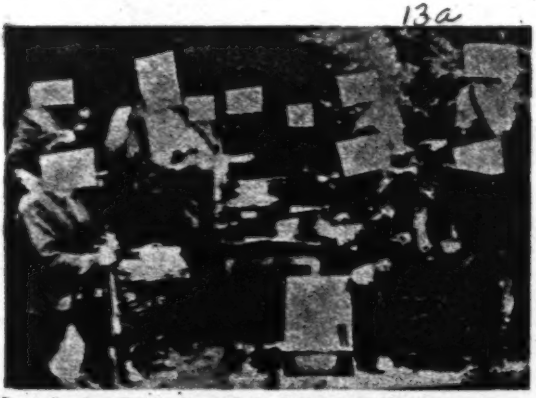

Press Section, Baltic Area of the Lithuanian Liberation Army. An underground newspaper in the process of printing in a forest.

876 626 Lithuanian language, but in Vilnius classes are bilingual. Technological training is favored from the top, and students themselves elect such classes for practical reasons. The Marxist-Leninist "science" is obligatory. Nevertheless, of 2,000 students of the University of Kaunas, only 13 were members of the Komsomol in the school year 1947-48.

883 665 The Komsomol (Communist Youth organization) —just vegetates: there are few Lithuanian recruits. These are found in the cities only. The Komsomol had enjoyed some success during the early days of the second occupation as a "security measure." However, when the authorities began employing the Komsomol personnel for repression, espionage, grain collection supervision, etc., the ranks dwindled. The *Komsorgs* (Komsomol organizers) are pressuring students to join the Komsomol and school directors second the efforts, but there is practically no response: in schools of 500 pupils, only a dozen or so, mostly children of non-Lithuanian race, belong to the Komsomol.

Membership in the "Pioneers"—the parody of boy scouting—is not obligatory but school authorities warn the parents to enroll their children.

In Kindergartens, communist and anti-religious propaganda is forced on little children, and teachers slyly attempt to enlist the little ones as informers on their parents and friends.

Forcible Collectivization and Duplicity

423 Unbelievable official duplicity is practiced by the Kremlin. Thus, *Izvestiya*, the official organ of the Soviet Government, in the issue No. 172 of 22 July 1948 wrote:

"The Agrarian Reform has been consummated in Lithuania. 92,000 former smallholders and the landless have received gratuitously FOR ALL TIME 659,000 hectares of land, tens of thousands horses and cows, over 100,000 houses and other farm structures.

"Prior to the completion of harvesting, over 250 kolkhozes were found in the country."

The final phrase presaged the forcible drive against the "smallholders and the landless" from whom land was seized and redistributed in order to provide statistical data to show a great Soviet "achievement," prior to driving the expropriated "recipients of the land FOR ALL TIME" into the kolkhozes. And yet,

423 so many solemn assurances had been made on the highest authority that there would be no collectivization. . . .

The Russians well realize that collectivization means a decrease of production and a lowering of living standards. But the Soviet regime—materialistic in all its aspects—does not concern itself with materialistic calculations in its drive for forcible collectization: collectivization is a part of the "ideological drive." That is, a part of perfecting the POLICE REGIME.

There were no "estate owners" or "peasants" in Lithuania: Lithuanian agriculturists were all dignified and self-respecting medium and small FARMERS, HUSBANDMEN, who produced enough to maintain comfortable living standards, provided gradual accumulation of farming machinery, earned income enabling them to send their children to universities. They entered specialized fields of production—dairying, cattle breeding, sugar beet production, fowl raising, pig breeding, etc. Lithuanian agricultural economy enabled the country to export annually increasing quantities of the highest grade butter, eggs, cheese, hams, bacon, canned meat, frozen meats, flax, bristles, casings, lard, etc. The farmers lived in isolated homesteads, rather than in Russian-type clustered villages. They enjoyed privacy in their homes surrounded by orchards and flower gardens and crosses.

But, from the Soviet point of view, individual farming tends to maintain "rugged individualism," independent thinking, self-reliance, self-respect, dislike of a police interference. Production by independent farmers cannot be controlled by the most precisely calculated estimates—and the Russians are thinking in terms of simple grain production, rather than specialized varieties of agriculture. Russian officials can never be certain whether the last ounce had been squeezed from an independent farmer.

And a farmer living in his isolated homestead escapes the continual surveillance of the MVD network of spies! Walking off to his orchard, garden or grove, he could maintain liaison with the "people's enemies" and "political bandits"—and every independent-thinking Lithuanian is either a "political bandit" or a "people's enemy" in the Soviet mentality. He could supply the "bandits" with food or clothing, or shelter them at night. This is the most "criminal" aspect of individual farming.

474 In the kolkhoz—it is quite different.

626 Hundreds of families are herded into a closely guarded enclosure where each person is assigned so much "living space" and has no choice in selecting either the "breathing space" or room mates. A few dozen armed MVD troops guard the huge estate bared of all tree vegetation. There is no chance for "hoarding" or secreting a part of the production which is checked in the field by Party officials. No one can enter or leave unnoticed and unquestioned. Every fifth person is an agent informer of the MVD. No one can leave at night or maintain any contacts unsurveyed by the MVD. Everyone can be depended upon to report dutifully for casting his or her ballot at periodic "elections." No one owns any property, except the few pieces of furniture, bedding and personal rags. No one can read the clandestine press unobserved by the agents. No one can own a radio set or listen to clandestine broadcasts. There are "red corners" supplied with ample official propaganda literature and a radio

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tuned to either Vilnius or Moscow broadcasts deemed proper by the authorities—and loudspeakers are installed so that no one can escape hearing such news. And there is no church or chapel—no one can leave to attend religious services.

In fact, the kolkhoz is a CONCENTRATION CAMP OF STATE SERFS. The Council of Ministers of the Soviet Union published a decree on 7 July 1948: "No one may leave the kolkhoz or any section thereof without permission of the authorities." The serfs must produce their quotas of work—or face a trial for "sabotage."

The *Izvestiya* article of 22 July 1948 was preceded by a boast of comrade Sniečkus, First Secretary of the LKP/b CK: "659,000 ha. of land were seized from estate owners and redistributed to smallholders and the landless." The gratuitious gift of land "for all time" of 15% of all cultivated land area of the country was coupled with a boast of comrade Sniečkus: 900 farms in Šiauliai county were merged into 32 "co-operative artels."

Soon after the gift of land "for all time," the Riga radio broadcast on 30 August: "Sooner or later, *all* of the farmers of Latvia *must* go into kolkhozes." This tune was immediately echoed in the press of Lithuania: those refusing to go into "co-operative artels" were branded "state traitors." . . .

Collectivization Procedure

474 Prior to 1948, there were 20 kolkhozes established in the depopulated and Russian-resettled District of Klaipėda and areas of Vilnius vacated by repatriates to Poland. Thereafter, the first kolkhozes were established among Russian Old Believer sectarians in the northeast. The first kolkhoz near Utena, in a purely Lithuanian community invaded by Russian settlers, was destroyed by the guerrillas. The serfs scattered.

In the spring of 1948, the collectivization drive was pushed.

[234] It began with the dairying farmers. Thus, the Party organ *Tiesa* announced in its issue of 11 May:

"Formerly, milk delivery quotas were fixed according to the number of cows owned by the farms. Now, milk delivery quotas are assessed according to the ratio of general land area under cultivation. The new system aims at inducing the farmers to develop the cattle industry. Furthermore, this decree is directed against the sabotage by the kulaks who falsify the actual number of cows held by them.

"On the other hand, peasants of the kolkhozes are relieved from any compulsory milk deliveries this year. Collective farms deliver milk from every hectare of land under cultivation—25 kilograms per hectare. Nevertheless, 50% reduction is granted for the years 1948 and 1949."

In the issue of 19 September 1948 comrade Sniečkus announced:

"The urgent desire of farmers to go into collective farms gained during the past spring and summer."

He cited 32 kolkhozes in Šiauliai county and new kolkhozes at Sasnava, Liūbavas and Kalvarija. At the same time he threatened a "relentless drive against kulak saboteurs" failing to meet compulsory grain and produce quotas. Numerous instances of prosecution and "loss of freedom" were cited.

793 659 661 they discontinue holding Mass and stop the performance of other priestly duties. A number of priests were arrested and the NKVD attempted to enlist their services by threats and blackmail. Because of these methods, several priests consented—and, immediately after their release, fled abroad. Those refusing to become agents were imprisoned. Soon the number of prisoners grew as many friars, preachers and high school students heroically defended their faith.

626 527 461 The Russians initiated a campaign against religious *traditions*. They began by banning the traditional Corpus Christi processions in the streets. All Saints Day was declared to be a working day, and the authorities banned traditional services and mass visits to cemeteries on All Souls' Day. During Advent and Lent, the bolsheviks encouraged dancing, entertainment and anti-religious lectures. Good Friday and Holy Saturday, as well as the second day of Easter, were designated working days. Those failing to report for work on the second day of Easter were prosecuted. In general, at frequent intervals, ordinary Sundays were periodically declared to be working days, and Saturdays—days of rest.

876 626 The teaching of religion in schools was replaced by classes on biology and the Stalin constitution. Biological lectures popularized "Darwinism." The "science of constitution" was to popularize a "Soviet democracy" and its oft-varying shifts directed by party line. In place of religious sodalities and athletic groups, the bolsheviks attempted to form *"Komsomol"* (Communist Youth) nests directed by political instructors called "Komsorg." Religious sermons were replaced by anti-religious tirades in the communist-controlled press and at mass meetings. Attendance at such mass-meetings to hear blasphemies was made compulsory.

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626 661 558 Churches kept open and functioning. However, attendants at religious services were terrorized. The Party posted uniformed and non-uniformed spies at church doors to observe and list the churchgoers. Attendance in church was a sufficient reason for dismissal from higher offices.

000 The anti-religious drive, growing in tempo, began to expand. When Bishops Brizgys and Ramanauskas called on Pozdniakov, the former Soviet Minister to Lithuania and at present the Kremlin's depury satrap, to ask for the return of the premises of the Theological Seminary, the Russian attempted to "reason" with them. Pozdniakov stated that they should have no illusions: what had been accomplished in Russia in 20 years, will be achieved in Lithuania within two to three years by experienced administrators. Why should the Seminary "delude" young men? By the time they became priests, there would be no duties to perform—in Russia the priests already have nothing to do. . . .

Lithuanian Resistance to the Anti-Religious Drive

798 791 The Lithuanians had suffered much for religion—murder, imprisonment and exile to Siberia—during

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of laymen active in Catholic Action were either murdered or exiled to Siberia. 40,000 Lithuanians were deported to Russia during that one lone year, and at least two-thirds of the number were Catholic Action members.

The Second Russian Occupation

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As far back as 1942, Comrade Vyshynsky, Deputy Commissar of Foreign Affairs and Liquidator of the Democratic Latvian State, admitted to a foreign statesman that bolshevik tactics in the Baltic States were based on an erroneous policy: the method of violence and compulsion had been a mistake.

In July 1944, the Russians again invaded the Baltic States. However, there was no change in their policy or methods regarding religion: they permitted no Catholic organizations, press or instruction of religion in schools.

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The Salesian monastery at Skirsnemunė was encircled by the Red Army and all physically able friars were drafted into the Red Army.

Soon thereafter, the tactics regarding the clergy wavered. Soviet overlords attempted to maintain, to some extent, the propaganda thesis regarding the alleged existence of "freedom of religion" in the Soviet Union. Only one Catholic Seminary, of the former four, was left in Lithuania, but divinity students, as other university students, were exempt from military duty. The number of divinity students was sharply limited to 150—for a Catholic nation of three million —instead of the previous 850.

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This measure represented a lull in the anti-religious drive: religion was to be eliminated by other means, by mass deportations of the faithful and their replacement by Communist Russians, so that, in the words of comrade Pozdniakov, the priests would find no employment for their vocation, no audience to listen to them. By effecting the primary aim of the Soviet regime—the liquidation of the Lithuanian people—the secondary aim, that of abolishing religion, would be simultaneously achieved. This explains the change in tactics, not the basic aim.

Furthermore, the new "party line" sought not merely to leave the clergy untouched, but to use them for political interests of bolshevism, as is done in Russia with the Orthodox clergy. In 1946 the NKVD encountered great difficulty with armed Lithuanian guerrilla operations. The NKVD decided to use the bishops and clergy to break the fighters' will to wage war. The Ministry of Interior (NKVD-MVD) demanded that the bishops publish pastoral letters and in sermons condemn the armed resistance and urge an end to it.

The alien regime attempted to attain two purposes: to enlist the clergy's aid to further its plans, and to drive a wedge between the clergy and the fighting nation. However, the plan was too obviously underlined with "red" threads, and the bishops declined to do the NKVD bidding. When the NKVD threatened with repressions, one bishop frankly told the satraps: "It is all the same to me whether I live five more years or less—I shall not soil the authority of the Church."

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ing Holy Mass. With his hands tied behind his back, he was pushed into an auto, driven to the railroad station, and placed on board a train.

Bishop Matulionis was arrested in mid-December 1946. The old martyr bore himself with dignity and firmness. To warnings by well-wishers he replied: "I know the bolsheviks." He had ordained some divinity graduates December 9 and 12th, and appeared very weak. He was arrested a few days later for having issued a pastoral letter warning against the wiles of Komsomol.

Arrests of the clergy are more numerous after several visits to "Prime Minister" Gedvila to protest against limiting the number of divinity students to 150. The seminary's building is being requisitioned: its quarters in Marian Fathers' Charity Church are being turned over to Nurses School.

A favorite Russian method is to promote dissension. When Rev. Nagulevičius, pastor of Obeliai, was arrested, the NKDV lodged a suspended priest in the rectory. This "pastor" refused to admit the priest appointed by the bishop. The Chancellor of the diocese arrived to settle the matter, but the NKVD "pastor" refused to obey. When the Chancellor visited comrade Gailevičius, Adviser on Cult Affairs in Vilnius, the latter said: "At present the people rule. This is apparently the people's will, and we cannot help in this matter."

The NKVD is attempting to install its own "priests" and, eventually, to have a Church administration subservient to the NKVD. Thus far, only one apostate is known.

No priests are admitted to the Klaipėda-Memel District.

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Congregations are being evicted from their quarters although, officially, the monasteries are not banned. St. Casimir's Sisters are still in possession at Pažaislis, and the Franciscan Fathers are still left in Kretinga.

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Priests and Church property are heavily taxed. For instance, the Cathedral of Kaunas must pay 46,000 rubles, the Cathedral of Panevėžys 40,000, the small Church of St. Nicholas in Vilnius dating back to the 14th century, is taxed 16,000 rubles. The late Mgr. Jokubauskas, administrator of the Bishopric of Kaunas who died in February 1947, was taxed 20,000 rubles. The figures become significant when it is realized that an average laborer earns 200 rubles a month.

Sidelights of Anti-Religious Drive

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Religious practice is permitted inside the church only: Stalin's constitution grants "freedom of belief" and warrants the liberty of anti-religious propaganda. No religious texts, not even prayerbooks, are permitted to be published—"paper shortage" . . . On the other hand millions of vile pamphlets are printed.

Once more, uniformed sentinels and agents in mufti are ostentatiously posted at church doors. They look over every face and scribble notes in the "blocnotes." Attendance in church means dismissal from a responsible post in the government. Teachers attending religious services are denounced in the press as "persons of low morality." A high school director inquired of

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